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# How N.Y. Times Hurt U.S. National Interests

Americans concerned about the abuse of power by the liberal media have a new semi-hero—Lt. Gen. John T. Chain Jr., the director of the State Department Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs. In response to a New York Times reporter who disclosed top-secret information, the general has publicly said, in effect, "Shame on you!"

Ironically, the Times reporter, Leslie H. Gelb, was director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs in the Carter Administration. This fact, in Chain's view, made the disclosure even more serious and irresponsible.

In a front-page story on February 13, Gelb reported the contents of a classified U.S. government document on U.S. nuclear weapons strategy. He revealed the names of the countries identified in the document as possible recipients of U.S. nuclear weapons and also described the precise characteristics of the weapons that might be deployed in such an emergency.

The document had been given to the Times by an associate of the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), a controversial think-tank often criticized for cozying up to Communist regimes. How IPS got hold of this document is a question that observers say should be answered by the Justice Department.

As a result of the story, Gen. Chain barred his staff from talking to Gelb. Moreover, Gelb's photograph in the State Department — put there to honor his service in the Carter years — was ordered removed and in its place was inserted the statement:

"Removed for cause. The P.M. [i.e. Gelb] did willingly, willfully and knowingly publish in 1985 classified information, the release of which is harmful and damaging to the country."

Gen. Chain has since backed down from these strong actions. He lifted the order barring members of his staff from talking to Gelb and the statement replacing the photograph has also been removed. However, the photograph itself has not been returned, and Gelb is sore about it.

"I would like the picture restored and my good name restored as well," Gelb told us. He said Gen. Chain's actions were "totally uncalled for."

Gelb's story was written in such a way as to suggest that countries which enjoy the protection of the U.S. nuclear umbrella have the automatic right to know how they might fit into U.S. nuclear defense strategy. But the document itself dealt with a hypothetical situation and the countries named in it — though not told in advance of the plans — would be free to accept or reject the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons.

Gelb noted in his story that the document had already been the subject of press coverage in other countries and had caused an uproar in some because they had not been "informed" by the U.S. Administration of their possible role. What Gelb's story succeeded in doing was cause even more of an uproar.

One of the countries named in the document, for example, was Canada. On the same day that Gelb's

article appeared, the conservative government of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney came under increasing internal pressure to pledge not to allow U.S. nuclear weapons on Canadian soil under any circumstances.

The fear expressed by Administration officials is that these countries may be pressured into following the example of New Zealand, which recently announced that it would not even allow U.S. warships with nuclear weapons or propelled by nuclear power to dock at its ports.

The role in the controversy played by the Institute for Policy Studies — an organization extremely critical of U.S. nuclear policy — was acknowledged in the part of Gelb's story that was continued back on page 12. He noted that the document, dated 1975, was "apparently" given to authorities in Canada, Iceland, Bermuda and Puerto Rico by William M. Arkin, who was identified as just "a nuclear weapons expert at the Washington-based Institute for Policy Studies." Arkin also "made available" the document to the Times.

When we asked why he did not disclose the left-wing orientation of the IPS, Gelb said it wasn't his general practice to describe organizations on either side of the political spectrum. "Once you get into the business of labeling," he said, "that is a way of discrediting or pigeonholing." He said what an organization says "should speak for itself."

But in the opinion of internal security and intelligence experts, the IPS is an organization that should be exposed and discredited. The group has been criticized over the years for serving Communist aims.

In 1983, for example, when the IPS staged a "conference on disarmament" in cooperation with two agencies of the Soviet regime, 10 members of

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the U.S. Senate blasted the Soviet agencies as "fronts for Soviet intelligence" and the IPS as a group "which has for 20 years consistently supported foreign policy objectives that serve the interests of the Soviet Union." More than 75 members of the House also blasted the affair.

Gelb, as a former top official of the State Department, must have realized that the IPS purpose in distributing the secret document was to discredit or undermine U.S. foreign policy. The key question is why he went along with the effort. Gelb said that he would stand by the statements made by his superiors on why it was published.

In effect, the *Times* has claimed that Gelb's article contained no information that hadn't been published elsewhere and that he received guidance from the State Department so he would report the information in a "responsible manner."

On the first claim, one official told us, "That doesn't address the moral issue. It's information that's harmful and damaging to the U.S. Whether it's been published elsewhere doesn't mean that you have to again make it public. If it's wrong to publish it, it's wrong whether it's been published elsewhere before or not. Putting the information out on the front page of the New York *Times* under the name of a respected journalist certainly gives it more visibility."

On the second claim, the official said the State Department in no way encouraged or approved the story. The official added that Gelb was not furnished with any additional information but was told that the information he did have could be damaging to the U.S. Indeed, the *Times* has acknowledged that Secretary of State George Shultz asked the paper to withhold the story.

Gelb himself admitted that his own story was going to cause problems for the government he once served. Referring to reports about the secret document that had appeared in other countries, Gelb wrote:

"Administration officials expressed concern that further disclosures would contribute to what they called a growing 'nuclear allergy' around the world—recently evidenced in New Zealand and Western Europe—to any kind of involvement with nuclear weapons."

Gelb's February 13 story, in which he disclosed the names of the countries identified as possible recipients of U.S. nuclear weapons in emergency circumstances, was followed by another story on February 14 identifying four other locations for the possible deployment of such weapons. Again, Gelb cited a report provided by "the Washington-based Institute for Policy Studies" as his source.

This report, however, was not a secret U.S. document. It was written by William Arkin, whom Gelb had described in his first story as a "nuclear weapons expert."

Arkin's official title is "Director of the Arms Race and Nuclear Weapons Research Project" of the IPS. He is the author or co-author of several

books and articles on nuclear weapons. He's described in one of them as a former "intelligence analyst with the U.S. Army in Berlin" and a former senior staff member of the left-wing Center for Defense Information in Washington.

When Arkin was asked if he would talk to HUMAN EVENTS about his role in the Gelb controversy and his distribution of the secret document in other countries, he said, "Why should I talk to you? You're going to do a ---- story." He said, "absolutely not," to the question, "Don't you like HUMAN EVENTS?"

However, Arkin did simmer down long enough to hand over to us a copy of his report, dated February 1985, which was the basis for Gelb's additional disclosures on February 14.

"This report will discuss U.S. contingency plans for deployment of nuclear weapons and the grave political impact such plans can have," it states. "As the public furor over these plans demonstrates, the excessive secrecy which hides U.S. nuclear deployment plans can injure alliances and foreign relations."

But the problem wasn't the secrecy. It was the unauthorized disclosure of that secret information to a left-wing activist and its publication by a New York *Times* reporter who officials say should have known better.